

STUDENT NAME _____

New Jersey

Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment 2000-2001 Sample Test Form THIRD EDITION



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY DIRECTIONS – PART 1

Today you are going to take part of the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment for Language Arts Literacy. The assessment contains different types of text and different activities. In the first part of the test, you will look at a picture and then complete a writing task. In this activity, you have an opportunity to demonstrate how well you can organize and express your ideas in written text. You have received a Writer's Checklist of important points to remember as you write. Educators who read your writing will consider these important points when they read and score your writing.

You will have 25 minutes to complete the first writing task. Take a few minutes to think about the task and to plan what you want to say before you begin to write. You may use the prewriting/planning space to plan your text, but your prewriting will not be scored. Only your writing on pages 2-3 in your answer folder will be scored. Do your best to make your writing clear and well-organized. Keep your purpose in mind as you write and use your checklist.

You must use a No. 2 pencil. You may either print or write your final copy. You may not use a dictionary or any other reference materials during the test. However, you may use the Writer's Checklist. If you finish before the time is called, review what you have written using the Writer's Checklist to read critically and improve what you have written. Then, close your test booklet and wait quietly until you receive further instructions.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY - PART 1



David Burnett/CONTACT

WRITING TASK A

Every picture tells a story, but the stories we see may be different. Look closely at the picture. What story is it telling? Use your imagination and experience to speculate what the story is about or to describe what is happening.

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PREWRITING/PLANNING SPACE

When you finish your planning, turn to page 2 in your answer folder.

END OF PART 1

Be sure to write your draft on pages 2-3 in your answer folder. You may check your work on this part only.



**DO NOT GO ON TO PART 2
UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY DIRECTIONS – PART 2

In this part of the test, you will read a persuasive passage and then respond to the multiple-choice and open-ended questions that follow it. You may look back at the passage and make notes in your test booklet if you like, but you must write your answers in your answer folder.

You will have 35 minutes for this part of the test. If you finish this part before the time is called, close your test booklet and wait quietly until you receive further instructions.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY - PART 2

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 1–10: Read the passage and record your answers to the multiple-choice questions in the area labeled “LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY – PART 2, MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION” on page 4 in your answer folder.

Introduction: Author and fisherman Fred M. Collier examines the image that many people have of killer whales, or orcas.

Pirates in Tuxedos

by Fred M. Collier

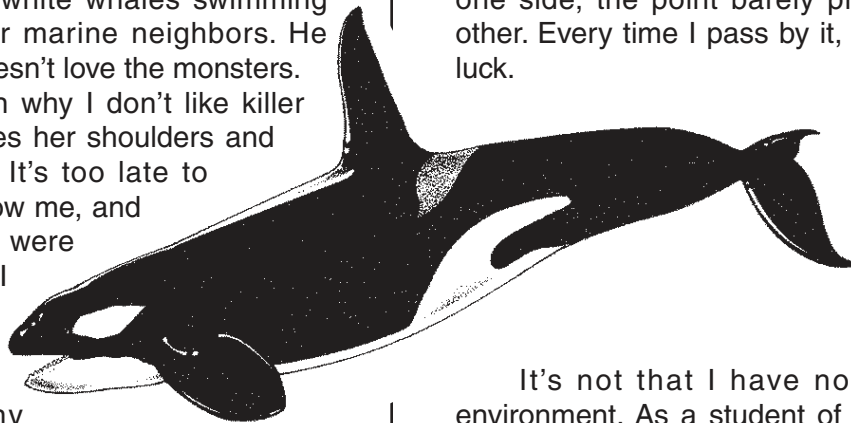
1 “I see you’ve got a poster of the enemy.” The loan officer sitting across the desk from me looks up at his framed poster of killer whales with a puzzled frown. All he sees is a painting with cuddly little black-and-white whales swimming peacefully among their marine neighbors. He can’t believe anyone doesn’t love the monsters.

2 As I start to explain why I don’t like killer whales, my wife hunches her shoulders and looks out the window. It’s too late to pretend she doesn’t know me, and now she’s wishing she were anywhere else. I wouldn’t blame her if she just got up and walked out. She’s seen this before, too many times. We don’t get the loan.

3 My wife cringes every time we enter an office or home featuring an image of killer whales. She cringes a lot. The hugely successful movie “Free Willy” starring Keiko the whale, and the hype surrounding it, have made killer whales the Bambis of the ‘90s, and it seems that nearly everyone thinks they’re as adorable as baby deer. Posters, paintings, T shirts and fuzzy, stuffed orcas are everywhere. But to me, orcas are “The Enemy,” the “tuxedo bandits” who have stolen thousands of dollars and countless days from me in the course of six years at sea. At least Keiko is safe in an Oregon jail. How wonderful it would be if several more pods (small groups of whales) could join him there.

As a commercial fisherman on a factory longliner in the Bering Sea, the Gulf of Alaska and near the Aleutian Islands, I have had plenty of opportunities to observe killer whales up close and personal. To those in my milieu, there is no sight more dreaded than their daggerlike dorsal

fin. This sentiment is expressed well by the stuffed toy orca hanging by the tail in the wheelhouse of the fishing boat on which I work. The handle of a paring knife juts at an angle from one side, the point barely protruding from the other. Every time I pass by it, I twist the knife for luck.



It’s not that I have no concern for the environment. As a student of architecture at the University of Oregon, I have focused on energy-efficient designs and use of natural materials for construction (solar heat, passive cooling, etc.). My wife and I share a Honda Civic VX that gets more than 40 miles per gallon, but I usually ride my bike if I don’t have much to carry. I vote for expensive legislation to protect salmon runs. I buy organic food as much as possible and recycle everything I can. I even cut off and recycle the steel bottoms of cardboard juice cans.

But while Coast Guard boardings can interrupt fishing operations for an hour or two, and storms can shut us down for a couple of days, a pod of killer whales can completely destroy the profitability of fishing a particular ground. There is no recourse. Killer whales can savage our lines at will. Unlike some whales, there appears to be plenty of killers roaming the Alaskan fisheries. I see them all the time. In the Bering Sea they’re about as rare as mosquitoes in a swamp.

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The truth is, killer whales are not cute. They are voracious killers of sea mammals including sea lions and the scourge of many fishermen. Sea lions are nearing extinction despite heavy restrictions on commercial and sport fishing near their rookeries. Orcas aren't subject to those restrictions, yet they are rarely blamed for declining stocks of seals and sea lions in the Aleutian Islands and Bering Sea.

Perhaps it wouldn't be so bad if we were competing with the whales for their natural food. Most of their prey is found within 20 fathoms of the surface, and they rarely if ever dive deeper than 100 fathoms. The turbot and sablefish we catch are bottom dwellers that live in depths from 250 to 450 fathoms. For fishing gear we use a single line, one to four miles long, with hooks baited with bits of squid. Anchors at either end of the line keep the gear on the seafloor, and small buoys mark where we haul the line. When whales strike, they eat nearly every fish off the line, leaving us with nothing but empty hooks. Our expenses stay the same, but all our product and profit are gone. Yet "Willy" is a hero, and we are scum.

It's tremendously frustrating to be hit by killer whales. Of course, if we don't have any gear in the water, we can go somewhere else. But if we do have gear soaking, we can let them eat our fish while we haul the gear on board, then move and hope they don't follow us. This is short term at best, and teaches "Willy" that fishing boats are his friends and will feed him when he drops by. Or we can drop the gear back into the water and wait for the pod to leave. This can take two or three days, and, by the time we haul the gear, most or all of the catch has been eaten by sand fleas or mud sharks on the sea bottom. And sometimes the whales come back anyway.

Frequently we'll see a single killer whale who disappears without eating anything. Within the next 24 hours the entire pod will join us, hoping for lunch. The boat I work on has a strict "do not feed the whales" policy. If we see whales approach while we're hauling the gear, we tie the line back on to the buoys and drop them into the sea. Once, seeing four killer whales leap completely out of the water in formation as they raced toward us, I just grabbed a knife and cut the line. Losing gear is a lesser evil than feeding whales.

I haven't seen the latest "Free Willy" movie, in which a fisherman is depicted as the criminal

who wants to kill the cuddly killer whale with a harpoon. But my sympathies are all with the fisherman. I kind of hope he gets his whale. I did, however, go to see Keiko in the Oregon Coast Aquarium. (My wife didn't think my argument that I've seen enough killer whales for both of us for life was good enough to pass up her opportunity to see one once.) It was actually kind of fun. For the first time I got to see a killer whale for less than \$1,000 worth of fish—and he was safe behind bars!

In the meantime, I'm trying to improve marital relations by not dumping all this on my wife quite so much. I'm even getting better in public. The last time my wife and I took our cat to the veterinary clinic, one of the receptionists was wearing a smock covered with images of the tuxedo bandits. I looked her in the eye and didn't say a word.

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1. "Pirates in Tuxedos" is specifically about a struggle between
 - A. freedom and dependence.
 - B. industry and nature.
 - C. environment and heredity.
 - D. dreams and reality.

2. Which detail supports the author's main idea?
 - A. Orcas ruin his fishing profits.
 - B. Killer whales travel in pods.
 - C. Orcas prey in the ocean depths.
 - D. Killer whales are intelligent.

3. As described in the article, killer whales are
 - A. dangerous to humans.
 - B. hated by fishermen.
 - C. ecologically beneficial.
 - D. gentle once trained.

4. In paragraphs 1 and 2, why does the author tell the anecdote about the loan officer's killer whale poster?
 - A. to show that loan officers love marine animals
 - B. to complain about his wife's lack of spirit and enthusiasm
 - C. to contrast his view of whales with the world's
 - D. to prove that fishermen are high-risk bank loan applicants

5. In paragraph 3, hype means
 - A. exaggerated publicity.
 - B. public outcry.
 - C. film awards.
 - D. hypnotic charm.

6. Though "Pirates in Tuxedos" is about one fisherman's thoughts on killer whales, it would be useful background reading for an oral report on
 - A. animal life in the Arctic Sea.
 - B. recycling in Alaska.
 - C. problems in the fishing industry.
 - D. regulations for commercial fishermen.

7. In paragraph 3, what does the author mean when he says, “How wonderful it would be if several more pods...could join him there”?
- He wants to bring marine life to the children of Oregon.
 - He wants to reduce the number of whales at sea.
 - He realizes that whales need companionship to survive.
 - He recognizes that whales in captivity are costly.
8. The author’s feelings toward killer whales are caused by
- media hype.
 - jealousy.
 - politics.
 - competition.
9. In the article, the author attempts to
- explain the differences between marine animals.
 - tell the story of his difficult and stormy career.
 - challenge a popular accepted opinion on orcas.
 - describe the pressures of life on board a boat.

10. The title metaphor, “Pirates in Tuxedos,” captures the killer whales’
- beauty and agility.
 - spirit and cleverness.
 - environmental impact.
 - character and appearance.

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTION 11: Write your response in the space provided on page 5 in your answer folder. DO NOT WRITE ANY RESPONSES IN THIS TEST BOOKLET.

11. “Pirates in Tuxedos” describes stresses that the author experiences in his work.
- Give one example of stress on the job that the author describes.
 - How does this job stress spill over into his personal life?

Use information from the article to support your response.

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTION 12: Write your response in the space provided on page 6 in your answer folder. DO NOT WRITE ANY RESPONSES IN THIS TEST BOOKLET.

12. In paragraph 12, the author decides not to say a word to the receptionist about his true feelings. Suppose he were to speak to her.
- What might he say?
 - Explain why he would say this.

Use information from the article to support your response.

END OF PART 2

You may check your work on this part only.
DO NOT GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.



**DO NOT GO ON TO PART 3
UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY DIRECTIONS – PART 3

This part of the test is located in your answer folder on pages 7-10.



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY DIRECTIONS – PART 4

Today, you will take the second part of the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment for Language Arts Literacy.

In this part of the test, you will read a narrative passage and then respond to the multiple-choice and open-ended questions that follow it. You may look back at the passage and make notes in your test booklet if you like, but you must write your answers in your answer folder.

You will have 40 minutes for this part of the test. If you finish this part before the time is called, close your test booklet and wait quietly until you receive further instructions.



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY - PART 4

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTIONS 13–22: Read the passage and record your answers to the multiple-choice questions in the area labeled “LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY – PART 4, MULTIPLE-CHOICE SECTION” on page 11 in your answer folder.

INTRODUCTION: *In this story, Ken is upset because his family is going to move to another state. Ken takes his bicycle for a long ride in the mountains, where he learns a valuable lesson about life. As you read this story, you will find out what he learned.*

A DIFFICULT CROSSING

BY MAUREEN CRANE WARTSKI

It was like riding a bicycle in a waterfall. Droplets of cold rain slid under Ken Rowles' slicker, dripped into his narrowed hazel eyes and down his neck. Ken really didn't care about the discomfort, though. What he *did* care about was that within a few days' time the Rowles family would be leaving Willsboro, Va., for good.

Boston, Mass., was where Ken's father had been transferred by his company. Ken's older brother, Gary, and their younger sister had accepted the move, but Ken couldn't think of a life away from the mountains he had known all his life. To be away from his cousins, his friends at the middle school, and the wildlife he loved—“No way,” Ken muttered.

This morning he'd begged his folks to let him stay in Willsboro with his uncle, aunt and cousins. Mom had looked unhappy, and Dad had cleared his throat, as he always did when he was serious. “Try to see this move as an adventure, son,” he'd said. “I know you'll like Boston if you just give it a chance.”

Frustrated and unhappy, Ken had decided to take his bicycle out for a long ride. But though he was an experienced cyclist, he found it hard going. It had been raining for days, and the road was slippery with mud that had washed down from the hills.

Gray mist shrouded the Blue Ridge Mountains and made it so hard to see that Ken didn't spot the broken-down car until he almost ran into it. A girl in a dripping wet yellow parka was checking the car's left tire, which was splayed out at a 45-degree angle.

She looked up when Ken pulled up beside her, and Ken recognized one of his brother's classmates at Willsboro High. Maria Santel was a transfer student from Chicago and had come to Willsboro in the middle of the year. Gary had

helped her catch up with her math, and later she had coached him in social studies.

“You're Gary's brother, aren't you?” Maria was asking. “Maybe you can help me fix this thing. I was driving along, then all of a sudden I couldn't steer.”

“I think you've lost a tie-rod end,” Ken told her. “You can't drive the car as it is. You'll need a tow.”

Maria's dark eyes were worried. “I was just driving Mom home from the doctor's—she's not feeling well. I hate to leave her while I go for help.”

“I'll go for you,” Ken offered. “I'll take a short cut home over Random Bridge. Don't worry, Maria—my dad'll take you home, and then you can call the garage.”

“That would be great! You folks around here are so kind.” Maria gave Ken a big smile that warmed him in spite of the rain. “When we first moved out here, Mom told me that the world's full of friends we haven't met. She was right.”

In spite of her brave words, she looked anxious. As he rode away, Ken wondered how Maria had felt when she came to Willsboro in the middle of the school year, which was similar to what he himself would be doing.

Ken's thoughts trailed off. He had reached the river, but the wooden bridge that spanned the
13 turbulent water had been partially washed away.

“Now what?” Ken muttered.

He could, of course, turn back and go another way, but that would mean wasting valuable time. Ken thought of Mrs. Santel and the disabled car and decided that he would have to cross the river somehow. The current was too swift for him to swim across, so he'd have to leave his bicycle and see if he could crawl over what remained of the bridge.

The wood was wet and slippery, and it took

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE. ➡

Ken some time to make his way across the bridge. Once on the other side, he started to jog down the road. But before he had covered a mile, he was forced to stop again. The rain had caused a part of the hillside to slide down onto the road, blocking it completely.

There was no safe way he could clamber over the debris, so he'd have to make his way around the landslide. Ken remembered a trail that he and his cousins had explored not long ago. It looped through the hills and valleys and would return to the road on the other side of the blockage.

Mist made the trail hard to locate, and even when he'd found it, Ken's troubles were far from over. A brook had overflowed its banks, and several times Ken sank up to his thighs in swirling water.

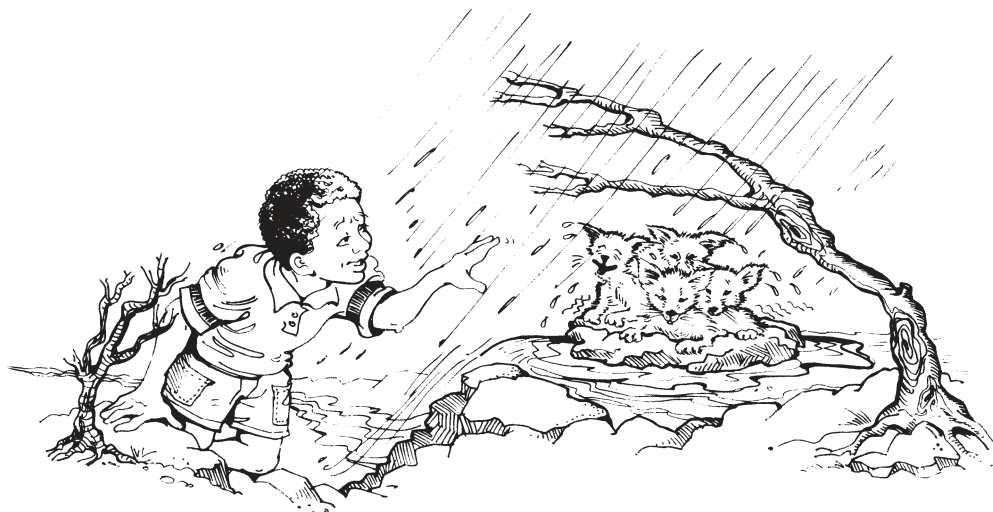
As he cautiously made his way along the trail,

time to waste.

It took half an hour of serious hiking to return to the road, where Ken flagged down a passing motorist with a CB. The man promised to relay news of the downed bridge and the landslide to the highway patrol. "And please tell them that there's a sick lady in a broken-down car at the other end of Random Bridge," Ken added. "They need help right away."

He himself ran the rest of the way home, stopped only long enough to change out of his wet clothes, and then left with his father and brother to help clear the road. By the time they arrived at the scene, police, DPW¹ workers, and volunteers had gathered to help in the clean-up effort, and a highway patrolman assured Ken that the Santels had been taken safely home.

Ken was glad that Maria and her mother



a sharp yip made him look up. Some distance away four fox cubs were perched on a stone which was surrounded by water. They looked thoroughly wet and miserable, and one of them turned toward Ken and yelped mournfully.

Ken couldn't help grinning at the expression on the cub's face. Then he sobered, remembering that when he had been here last, he and his cousins had seen a fox's den near the brook.

"So you lost your home," he said aloud. "I'm sorry, guys. But at least I can take you to higher ground."

The little foxes were too dazed to protest when Ken carried them to a safer, sheltered spot. "I hope the mother fox is O.K. and will find them," Ken worried, as he hurried along the trail. He wished that he could stay around and make sure that the fox cubs would be all right, but he had no

were all right, but he couldn't help worrying about the fox cubs he'd left back on the trail. So many things could happen to helpless, homeless animals.

"You O.K., son?" Ken looked up to see his father watching him. When Ken explained what had happened, his father set down his shovel.

"I think they've got the situation under control here," he said. "Let's go see what happened to your fox family."

The rain had stopped as Ken led the way back up the trail, and there were signs that the worst was over. Birds had begun to sing from the sodden trees by the time they reached the spot where he had left the fox cubs.

¹Department of Public Works



But instead of four little foxes, there was only one. “Something’s happened to the others,” Ken groaned. “I knew I shouldn’t have left them.”

He broke off as a sleek, russet form slipped out of the wet underbrush. As Ken and his father watched, the mother fox picked up her cub by the scruff of the neck and carried him away.

“She must have taken the others to a new den,” Ken’s father said. “Don’t worry, son. Your foxes are together and safe.”

The foxes had found a new home. So had the Santels. Ken remembered Maria’s warm smile and what she’d said about strangers becoming friends.

He knew that he’d miss Willsboro terribly—no question about that. But he could come back and visit, couldn’t he? And meanwhile the Rowles family would be together. They would share adventures and meet people.

The thought brought a stir of warmth, even of excitement. Ken felt his heart lighten for the first time in weeks.

“If the clean-up crew won’t miss me, I’d better be getting home,” he told his dad. “The way I figure it, I’ve got a lot of packing to do.”



13. The reader learns that the worst of the storm is over when

- A. birds start singing.
- B. the foxes find a home.
- C. DPW workers arrive.
- D. the Santels arrive home safely.

14. What causes Ken to leave the road and look for an old trail?

- A. a landslide
- B. turbulent waters
- C. fox cubs
- D. heavy mist

15. Why doesn't Ken stay around to make sure the fox cubs will be all right after he moves them?

- A. He is afraid their mother will return soon.
- B. He thinks it is more important to get help for Mrs. Santel.
- C. He spots a passing motorist with a CB.
- D. He wants to assist in clearing the road.

16. Which experience would BEST help you to understand Ken's dilemma?

- A. riding a bicycle in the rain
- B. rescuing a stranded kitten
- C. helping someone with car trouble
- D. transferring to a new school

17. In paragraph 13, the author writes that Ken "had reached the river, but the wooden bridge that spanned the turbulent water had been partially washed away." What is the meaning of turbulent?

- A. calm
- B. raging
- C. slippery
- D. misty

18. In the next to last paragraph, Ken felt his heart lighten for the first time in weeks. This means that Ken became more

- A. anxious.
- B. brave.
- C. cheerful.
- D. worried.



19. Maria quotes her mom in saying that “The world is full of friends we haven’t met.” Her mother probably means that
- A. you can find new friends wherever you go.
 - B. there are many other people in the world.
 - C. some of your friends will be moving, too.
 - D. the world is overcrowded.
20. Which of the following contributes MOST to the suspense of the story?
- A. Ken’s fear of traveling in a storm
 - B. Maria’s broken tie-rod
 - C. the darkness of the night
 - D. the mountains and weather
21. Ken is in greatest danger when he
- A. encounters four foxes.
 - B. swims in the swift current.
 - C. rides his bicycle in a waterfall.
 - D. crawls over the slippery remains of a bridge.

22. At what point in the story does Ken accept the move to Boston?
- A. When he realizes the foxes and the Santels have found new homes.
 - B. When he realizes the foxes have been stranded and need his help.
 - C. When he decides to help the Santels and the foxes.
 - D. When he learns of his father’s transfer to Boston.

DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTION 23: Write your response in the space provided on page 12 in your answer folder. DO NOT WRITE ANY RESPONSES IN THIS TEST BOOKLET.

23. Ken’s older brother and younger sister are able to accept the family’s move to Boston, but Ken is distressed with the idea.
- Give TWO or more reasons WHY a middle-school student might not want to move.
 - Describe HOW Ken is able to resolve this problem.

Use information from the story to support your response.



DIRECTIONS FOR QUESTION 24: Write your response in the space provided on page 13 in your answer folder. **DO NOT WRITE ANY RESPONSES IN THIS TEST BOOKLET.**

24. Before the story begins, Mr. Rowles is talking with the family about their upcoming move to Boston. If you were Ken,
- what questions would you ask about the move?
 - how might the answers change your mind about the move?

Use information from the story to support your response.

END OF PART 4

You may check your work on this part only.
DO NOT GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.



**DO NOT GO ON TO PART 5
UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY DIRECTIONS – PART 5

In this part of the test, you will complete a writing task. You will have an opportunity to demonstrate how well you can organize and express your ideas in written text. You have received a Writer's Checklist of important points to remember as you write. Educators who read your writing will consider these important points when they read and score your writing.

You will have 45 minutes to complete the writing task. Take a few minutes to think about the task and to plan what you want to say before you begin to write. You may use the prewriting/planning space in your test booklet to plan your text, but your prewriting will not be scored. Only your writing on pages 14-17 in your answer folder will be scored. Do your best to make your writing clear and well-organized. Keep your audience and purpose in mind as you write and use your checklist.

You must use a No. 2 pencil. You may either print or write your final copy. You may not use a dictionary or any other reference materials during the test. However, you may use the Writer's Checklist. If you finish before the time is called, review what you have written using the Writer's Checklist to read critically and improve what you have written. Then, close your test booklet and wait quietly until you receive further instructions.



LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY - PART 5

WRITING SITUATION

This year your school's soccer team won the state championship. When your team won, students ripped up pieces of the soccer field and cut the goal nets to keep as souvenirs of the game. As a result, the school principal has announced that any money raised this year by all the school clubs will go towards repairing the playing field and replacing the soccer equipment.

The principal's decision has created a controversy in your school. You decide to write to the editor of your school newspaper about this decision.

WRITING TASK B

Write a letter to the editor of your school newspaper. Explain your views on the principal's decision requiring that money raised by school clubs be used to repair the field and replace soccer equipment. Use examples, facts, and other evidence to support your point of view.

PREWRITING/PLANNING SPACE

When you finish your planning, turn to page 14 in your answer folder.



PREWRITING/PLANNING SPACE (continued)

END OF PART 5

Be sure to write your draft on pages 14-17 in your answer folder. You may check your work on this part only.

